[English]

Modernisation of Railway System

579. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of plans drawn up and being implemented to modernise the railway system; and

(b) the details of progress made during the last three years in respect of modernisation of the railway track, telecommunications etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) Some of the noteworthy plans drawn up and implemented, and under implementation for modernising the Railway system in the VIII Plan period are as under :

The Computerised Passenger Reservation System has been expanded to a large number of locations During the VIII Plan, the total number of computerised reservation locations has increased from 65 as on 31.3.92 to 271 as on 31.3.96, thus, covering over 92% of the total reservation work load on Indian Railways It is planned to bring about further improvement in the reservation services by introducing networking arrangements.

Computerisation has been introduced in other areas of railway working including accounting work, certain aspects of personnel management, inventory control, wagon census and interchange, reservation enquiry system etc

High-powered Electric and Diesel Locomotives are being imported with transfer of technology for ultimate indigenisation of production. Main Line Electric Multiple Units and Diesel Multiple Units have been introduced on high density traffic routes for the convenience of suburban passengers

A high speed coach capable of 160 kmph speed is under trial.

Latest design concrete sleepers, modern rail fastenings and head-hardened rails are being utilised to strengthen the track. Track maintenance is being increasingly mechanised.

Electrification of the high density traffic corridors is being continued

For enhancing safety, Auxiliary Warning System, Route Relay Interlocking, Solid State Interlocking, Track Circuiting are being extended over the system.

Modernisation of telecommunications include gradual switching over from analog systems to digital systems, which include digital microwave, optical fibre and digital telephone exchanges. Microprocessor based public address system informing passengers on platforms about the status of the train running is being provided at important stations. Railways are also introducing universal train radio communication system between driver, guard and the nearest station to enable immediate response in case of emergencies/accidents.

Bilaspur-Cochin Express

580. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether representations have been received to provide a pantry car in Bilaspur Cochin Express and to extend it upto Trivandrum; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per extant policy, pantry cars are provided in order of priority on certain selected long distance Mail/ Express trains keeping in view the timings, stoppages, adequacy of catering services from static units enroute etc. subject to availability of pantry cars and maximum permissible load of the train In the absence of pantry car on this train, the demands for catering services are met from stations enroute. The extension of 7057/7058 Bilaspur-Cochin Express upto Trivandrum has not been found feasible at present due to operational and resource constraints.

Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation of India

581. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation of India (Durgapur) is in the list of BIFR;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the amount of subsidy being given per quintal on the fertilizer by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA). (a) and (b). In accordance with the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985, Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd (HFC), including its Durgapur unit stands referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction since April 1992.

(c) The weighted average of the subsidy paid on indigenous and imported urea during 1995-96 was Rs. 342.40 per quintal.

[Translation]

Man-Eater Hyena

582. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether reports regarding killing of children by man-eater hyena from a few districts